

DATE: June 16, 2005
TO: School Food Authority (SFA)
FROM: Patti Harding, Lead Consultant
Iowa Department of education
Bureau of Nutrition Programs and School Transportation
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
SUBJECT: Direct Certification Letter

On the back of this memorandum is a copy of the Direct Certification letter that will be mailed to all Food Stamp eligible households the first week in August.

For each child listed, the parent will need to write in the name of the school, the grade and sign the form. They should then return the form to the school/district. If they do this, they do not need to complete an application for free meals.

Do not allow parents to write in the names of children. Only those children whose names are preprinted on the form qualify for free meals based on Direct Certification.

The county number is listed below the Social Security Number. Also, the letter will be coded according to racial/ethnic group. A small number (1-6) will be placed in the upper right corner of the "school use only" box. This information will help you maintain your Ethnic/Racial form (gray).

- 1 = White (not of Hispanic Origin)
- 2 = Black (not of Hispanic Origin)
- 3 = American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 4 = Asian or Pacific Islander
- 5 = Hispanic
- 6 = Indochinese

The above categories do not exactly match those found on the free and reduced price meal application but unfortunately, DHS has not updated their system to reflect the new ethnic/racial groups USDA has developed. If possible, when completing your Ethnic/Racial form use the parent provided information. If you don't have that information, you can use the above code.

Direct Certification letters should be treated as confidential information. Please handle Direct Certification letters in the same manner as the free and reduced price meal application. Again this year, on the back of the Direct Certification letter there is a place for parents/guardians to sign if they do not want their names released to Medicaid or *hawk-i*.

Direct your questions to Patti Harding at 515-281-4754 or e-mail at patti.harding@iowa.gov.